

# Argumentation and Debate: COM 257

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Fulfills Critical Thinking Requirement

# COM 257

What do you do in a debate class? Debate!

Students debate Issues of their choice whether campus, state, national, international, or interplanetary (if you have strong feelings about folks on Mars).

The course is more coached than taught in the traditional sense.

You will learn: The basic requirements of a case for change.

- Options for refuting such a case for change.

- Skills for critical listening.

- Ways of critiquing evidence and argument.

- Refutation skills

- Different ethical traditions underlying political positions.

- Cross-examination skills.

# Requirements

There will be there will be 3 or 4 rounds of debate depending on class size.

A round of debate will include each student taking the affirmative and then negative side of a question.

The last round will be cross examination.

Grading will be based on

1. Students' performance in the debates.
2. A final paper in which argumentation skills will be applied to an editorial or another kind of rhetorical artifact.

There are no written exams.

Students are warned not to purchase one of the outrageously expensive textbooks on the subject. Reading materials will be disseminated in class and electronically.

## Who Should Take This Class?

The skills of argumentation and debate are relevant to all situations in which a person makes a case for or against the adoption of an idea or candidate. That includes public, group and organizational settings. Anywhere that people seek to justify or refute ideas and action.

It is, of course, relevant for pre-law students but it is not limited to that post graduate goal.

If you have any questions ask the instructor or students who have had the course in the past.